



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OIFA Member Update - February 2023

AHCCCS Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) tracks timely care for members. EVV applies to all providers of EVV services, including paid family direct care workers. EVV is a federal requirement. All individuals who receive services from AHCCCS must participate. Members, guardians, and Direct Support Professionals (DSP) must all use EVV for DDD to pay providers.

The DDD services impacted are:

- Attendant Care
- Homemaker/Housekeeping
- Habilitation Hourly
- Home Health (Nursing, Licensed Health Aid, Home Health Aid)
- Respite

Qualified Vendors will help members set up their weekly schedule in EVV. A schedule helps DDD know if members are getting the services they discussed with their team. It is OK if some visits start or end at times a little differently from the schedule. Just be sure to record the reasons. Members with live-in caregivers may decide to develop a schedule or not. Read [AHCCCS Frequently Asked Questions for scheduling](#) for more details.

The Division created a page on its website for [Electronic Visit Verification](#). This page includes a link to the [AHCCCS website](#). It also has a Google Form for members, families, and providers to submit EVV questions.

Members and families should contact their Qualified Vendor Agency for questions about EVV.

In-Person Planning Meetings

The ability to hold planning meetings virtually has been in place since April 2020 due to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). Planning meetings are at the core of DDD's work to help members live self-directed and healthy lives. The connection between a Support Coordinator and member is key to helping members achieve their goals.

In-person planning meetings are necessary to ensure Support Coordinators can assess each member's health and well-being. This includes seeing the member's full living space to ensure essential needs are met. It also ensures members are free from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This is hard to do virtually.

Starting April 1, 2023, Support Coordinators will resume in-person planning meetings for these reasons. This will also align with the Division's policies. Members and families should work with their Support Coordinator if any health safety measures should be used at meetings.

Parents as Paid Caregivers for Their Minor Children

Parents as paid caregivers for their minor children is an option DDD offered when the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) began. This reduced the number of people that members had to see outside their homes. On Jan. 11, 2023, the federal government extended the COVID-19 public health emergency until mid-April 2023. This option will expire at the end of the quarter that the COVID-19 PHE ends.

However, this option is included in the AHCCCS American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending plan, approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). This option will be available through Sept. 30, 2024 under ARPA funding. The ARPA plan will take effect when the federal COVID-19 PHE expires.

After the COVID-19 PHE expires, parents will not be allowed to provide more than 40 hours of total paid care, per ALTCS member, per week. This applies even if they are employed by multiple agencies. Members may be assessed more than 40 hours based on their needs. However, a direct support professional must provide care if the hours exceed 40. A parent cannot do this.

In cases where two parents are paid caregivers, they can provide up to 40 hours of combined services per week, per ALTCS member, based on assessed need.

AHCCCS updated its [FAQ related to the parents as paid caregivers for their minor children](#) option.

COVID-19 Flexibilities Ending on April 1, 2023

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, DDD offered various flexibilities. These options helped members keep access to services they needed. They also gave Qualified Vendors direction. DDD will end some of those flexibilities on April 1, 2023.

- Support Coordinators will hold all person-centered planning meetings in person starting April 1, 2023. This change was noted in the first article.
- The Division will no longer assess for or authorize supports during remote learning. Schools are back to in-person learning.
- The Division is rescinding the guidance, "Assessing Risk for DDD Members Who Are At Higher Risk for Severe Illness From COVID-19."
- Qualified Vendors providing group home or developmental home services will no longer be required to hold a place for a member who moves to their family home due to COVID-19 staffing issues or other COVID-19 concerns.

DDD updated its [Actions Related to COVID-19](#) web page so it's easier to understand changes to COVID-19 flexibilities. DDD combined all flexibilities into a single table. This new table lists their effective dates and end dates.

On Jan. 30, 2023, the [federal government announced](#) the COVID-19 public health emergency would end on May 11, 2023. This means remaining COVID-19 public health emergency options will end on June 30, 2023.

All members with AHCCCS Complete Care plans should ensure their contact information is correct. This can be done online at healthearizonaplus.gov or by calling Health-e-Arizona Plus at 1-855-432-7587, Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Members and families who receive requests for information from AHCCCS should respond promptly.

AHCCCS will resume its regular business process of determining annual renewals for all AHCCCS members, which is why members should ensure their contact information is up to date in Health-e-ArizonaPlus.

Sonoran UCEDD Health Research Project Advisory Group

The University of Arizona Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (UCEDD) is looking for adults with disabilities who want to partake in health research projects. The Sonoran UCEDD is forming an advisory group that will:

- Select health projects and research areas important to people with I/DD;
- Discuss things (resources and tools) that help health researchers and their support staff to include people with I/DD; and
- Develop resources and tools to help health researchers include people with I/DD in their health-related projects.

The advisory group will meet virtually eight times via Zoom before July 2024. Interested members can complete an [application online](#).

The Affordable Connectivity Program

The Federal Communications Commission has launched the [Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#) to help ensure low-income households can afford Internet connections they need for work, school, health care and more. This program replaces the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

The ACP provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward Internet service for eligible households. Homes on qualifying tribal lands can receive up to \$75 per month. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet.

Enrollment for ACP is now open. [Information about eligibility](#) and a [link to apply](#) are online.

Policy Updates

Members or families interested in being notified about policy changes can [register online](#) to receive updates.

Town Hall Meetings

DDD hosts town hall meetings for members, families and providers. You can join via the Internet or by telephone. Attendees can also ask questions. **The next town hall will be held on Thursday, March 2, 2023.** Guests from Arizona Special Olympics will present at the meeting. Visit <http://bit.ly/dddtownhall> for details to join.

Community Resources

DDD has information for local, state, and national groups that support members and their families. The DDD website has links to many of these groups that can assist with day to day tasks and other services that may not be covered by the Division. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more.](#)

Arizona Warm Lines

Trained peer support specialists are available to provide support if you need it. These warm lines are available to all Arizonans age 18 and over. Peer support specialists have lived experience. They have been through tough times. They are trained to listen and support callers.

Area Covered	Provider	Phone Number	Hours
All Arizona Counties	NAZCARE	1-888-404-5530	4pm to 10pm Monday – Thursday 3pm to 10:30pm Friday – Sunday
Central Arizona	Crisis Response Network	602-347-1100	24 hours
Southern Arizona - Pima County	Hope, Inc	520-770-9909	8am - 10pm
Southern Arizona - All Other Counties	Hope, Inc	1-844-733-9912	8am - 10pm

The Family Involvement Center offers a warm line for family members. They offer support to family members that deal with behavioral health challenges. This service is also available at no cost.

- Statewide phone number: 1-877-568-8468
- Hours:
 - Monday - Friday: 8am - 6pm
 - Saturday - Sunday: 8am - 12pm

Crisis Services

If you, a family member, or a friend have a mental health emergency, it is important that you seek help right away. Trained crisis staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help over the phone. The Crisis lines are free, confidential, and open to anyone who needs help. For medical, police and fire emergency situations, always call 911.

Statewide Crisis Hotline

- 1-844-534-4673 (1-844-534-HOPE) or text 44673 (4HOPE)

Suicide and Crisis Hotlines by County

- Maricopa County served by Mercy Care: 1-800-631-1314 or 602-222-9444
- Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Santa Cruz and Yuma Counties served by Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan: 1-866-495-6735
- Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo and Yavapai Counties served by Health Choice Arizona: 1-877-756-4090
- Pinal County served by Mercy Care: 1-866-495-6735
- Gila County served by Mercy Care: 1-800-631-1314
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: 1-800-259-3449
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: 1-855-331-6432

- Tohono O’odham Nation: 1-844-423-8759

Especially for Teens

- Teen Life Line phone or text: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

National 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

Phone

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 available for talk or text
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Text

- Text the word “HOME” to 741741

Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse

Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse (FWA) are crimes. Report fraud, waste, and abuse right away. You will not get in trouble or lose services if you report any suspected fraud, waste, or abuse.

You can report FWA to DDD by:

- Calling DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Sending an email to dddfwa@azdes.gov
- Sending a letter to DES/DDD, Attn: Corporate Compliance Unit, 1789 W Jefferson St., Mail Drop 2HA1, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Completing this [online form](#).

You can also report FWA to AHCCCS

- Provider Fraud
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4045
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- Report Member Fraud:
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4193
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- If you have questions about AHCCCS fraud, abuse of the program, or abuse of a member, email the AHCCCS Office of Inspector General (OIG) at AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov.

Stay Up to Date

All old OIFA newsletters are available to view on DDD’s website. Visit the [Member Services](#) page and click on the “Member Newsletters” section.

DDD is Here to Help

Please contact your Support Coordinator or the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1 (TTY/TDD 711) if you have questions.

Call the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1, TTY/TDD 711, to ask for this material in other formats. Language help is available at no cost to you.